

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
REMARKS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AT THE ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION
ON REPOSITIONING THE UN
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM**

New York, 31 May 2018, 15:00

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,

I have just arrived this morning from Mali – but I wanted to be here personally to thank you for your leadership, engagement and constructive spirit.

Allow me to pay a special tribute to the co-facilitators Sabri Boukadoum, Permanent Representative of Algeria, and Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark.

The resolution you adopt today ushers in the most ambitious and comprehensive transformation of the UN development system in decades.

It sets the foundations to reposition sustainable development at the heart of the United Nations.

And it gives practical meaning to our collective promise to advance the Sustainable Development Goals for everyone, everywhere -- with poverty eradication as its first goal, leaving no one behind.

That is what this is really about.

In the end, reform is about putting in place the mechanisms to make a real difference in the lives of people.

You have been clear in your mandates to establish a new generation of UN Country Teams and strengthen our investments in people, planet, peace and prosperity.

National ownership and a strong focus on accountability and results will guide the system every step of the way.

Our teams on the ground will now be better able to tailor their presence, capacities, skillsets and overall response to your priorities.

We will reach out and build stronger partnerships with civil society, academia, the private sector and beyond to take actions to scale.

Our joint planning instrument in countries – the UN Development Assistance Framework – will better reflect country priorities and needs.

You will be able to count on impartial and empowered Resident Coordinators – fully devoted to the needs that you require to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, drawing on experience, skills and knowledge across the system.

I am extremely proud of the 129 Resident Coordinators working hard around the world in 165 countries – in some cases against all odds.

Being a Resident Coordinator is one of the most challenging jobs in the United Nations.

But the structures we have today at the country level are excessively reliant on personalities and goodwill across a system that does not always reward cooperation.

We now can resolve a historic deficit in our coordination function, and institutionalize what works, across the board.

I count on your support to adequately and predictably fund this reinvigorated Resident Coordinator nationally-driven, people-centred system.

As you know, my preference would have been to fund the Resident Coordinator system through the regular budget of the United Nations, to ensure predictability, sustainability and ownership from all Member States.

The hybrid funding solution put forward by the co-facilitators is the best possible alternative. By combining different sources, it diversifies the funding base and enhances the prospect of adequate and predictable funding.

You can count on the Secretariat – and on my personal commitment – to do our utmost to ensure successful implementation of this model. But let us also bear in mind that success will rely heavily on your generosity and sustained commitment.

I therefore appeal to you for your immediate support so that we can hit the ground running on 1 January 2019.

I am aware that we need to work now on the modalities by which the reinvigorated RC system will be operationalized, including its funding arrangements.

Before the end of the current General Assembly session, I will present an implementation plan addressing these questions.

We will consult closely with you as we develop the implementation plan and move to the transition phase.

Excellencies,

We will soon enter year four of the 2030 Agenda. We don't have a moment to lose.

We are committed to fast-track transformation, working closely with you - and for you on behalf of people.

Change is never easy. But it can be well-managed and inclusive to ensure smooth transitions and tangible outcomes. This is our commitment.

You can rely on my leadership and the UN development system to step up to meet your ambition.

I ask you to carry forward your resolve by supporting change through the governing bodies of agencies, funds and programmes – and through your capitals, in your bilateral relationship with each entity.

I will move immediately to put in place a transition team under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General to implement your decisions. This team will work in the same open, transparent and inclusive way we have conducted this process thus far and ensure the inclusion of our funds, programmes and specialized agencies.

Excellencies,

I thank you for your determination and resolve.

You have shown that consensus and ambition can go hand in hand.

You have done so because a stronger UN development system is in our common interest. It means more results for people, and more value for money.

Let us build on this achievement.

Let us see our efforts through for all those who look to us with hope to better their lives in our increasingly complex world.

Thank you very much.